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**Contact: Linda McCandless, [llm3@cornell.edu](mailto:llm3@cornell.edu), 315-787-2417**

**Institute of Food Science Opens Doors, Courts Students**

By Peter Seem

GENEVA, NY: Four undergraduates from across the country are finishing up their projects at Cornell's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY this August as a result of a research program initiated by the Cornell Institute of Food Science (CIFS). The Cornell University Food Science Summer Scholar program was designed to give undergraduates a chance to conduct independent research, an opportunity many don't get until graduate school, and to expose potential graduate students to Cornell's facilities and staff.

"I was in a similar program, and it was one of the best research experiences of my life," said Martin Wiedmann, one of the CIFS faculty who organized the summer program. "We want to offer them an internship in research, to see that academia and education is a valuable alternative to industry."

Thirteen undergraduate students from around the country arrived at Cornell on June 5 for orientation. On August 10, they gave presentations on their completed research projects. Four of those students, Jen Hilfiker, Joanna Nelson, Alina Prokopchuk and Sarah Valois, were assigned professors at the Geneva Campus. They lived at Hobart and William



1) Alina Prokopchuk prepares a beaker of solution as a part of her Food Science Scholars project with Chang Lee.

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SmithColleges.

A committee of CIFS faculty chose the 13 students from a field of 30 applicants. "The committee tried to match their interests with our expertise," said Olga Padilla-Zakour, a professor who directs the Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship at the Station.

Padilla-Zakour worked with Sarah Valois on making a natural drink from beet and fruit juice. Valois, from Erlanger, Kentucky, learned about the program from a professor at the University of Kentucky where she is a food science major. She was very impressed with the research facilities at the Station and said that conducting research gave her "a chance to find out what I really want to do at graduate school." Alina Prokopchuk agreed, "It's a good opportunity to gain some experience, and decide what I would like to do." Prokopchuk, from Rivne, Ukraine, is a food science and technology major at Oregon State University.

"This is a good opportunity for undergraduate studies. Every year I hire one or two students," said professor Chang Lee. "With the Food Science Scholars program I get the top students from other universities." Prokopchuk worked with Lee on anti-oxidant activity in apples, grapes and cherries.

Joanna Nelson, a food science and human nutrition major at the University of Florida, was involved in two projects at Geneva with Randy Worobo and Padilla-Zakour. They examined the natural anti-microbial properties of mustard, to determine if mustards need to be thermally processed.

Jen Hilfiker, a biochemistry major at Hartwick College, from Geneseo, New York, worked on a test for biocidal surfactants in cooling towers and water supplies.

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2) Jen Hilfiker works to develop a test for surfactants used as biocides under the direction of Richard Durst.

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3) Sarah Valois works with Olga Padilla-Zakour in the NYS Food Venture Center to develop a natural drink from beet and fruit juice.

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4) Joanna Nelson readies a petri dish for her summer research project in Randy Worobo's lab.

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